

IN THE CLAIMS

Please enter the following amendments:

- 1 (Original) An automated software distribution method comprising:
 - receiving a request to access a software distribution system;
 - determining if the requester is a registered user;
 - determining if a said registered user has authorization to perform internal or commercial scaleable software distribution framework activity;
 - performing an internal process associated with a scaleable software distribution framework and object model in which objects are linked together by unique object identifiers if said user is if-authorized; and
 - performing a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction if authorized.
- 2 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 further comprising notifying said requester that access is not granted.
- 3 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein the request is received from an internal user via an internal LAN.
- 4 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein the request is received from an external user via the Internet.

5 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein the user is able to access an internal storage of software products.

6 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein an internal user is able to download software code, make changes and upload the modified code.

7 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction is engaged in an electronic commerce environment.

8 (Original) The automated software distribution method of Claim 1 wherein a software transaction process is utilized.

109 (Currently Amended) An internal software publishing process comprising:
receiving a request to engage in software image publishing activities;
engaging in a data population process in accordance with a scaleable software distribution framework and object model in which objects are linked together by unique object identifiers;
checking a software distribution information to ensure the requester has authorization to engage in software image publication activities;
receiving requisite supervisory authorization to proceed with the publication;
and
executing a software publication.

~~11~~10 (Currently Amended) The internal software publishing process of Claim ~~10~~ 9 wherein the request is received from a software engineer that has built a software image ready for commercial release.

~~12~~11 (Currently Amended) The internal software publishing process of Claim ~~10~~ 9 wherein the data population process includes a software distribution framework (SWDF) Information Model, a SWDF Product Model and a SWDF Packaging Model.

~~13~~12 (Currently Amended) The internal software publishing process of Claim ~~10~~ 9 wherein ~~the~~ a software distribution framework (SWDF) packaging model is completed by pulling data from a database that includes features that map a software image and software product code.

~~14~~13 (Currently Amended) The internal software publishing process of Claim ~~10~~ 9 wherein software distribution framework (SWDF) authorization information is checked to make sure the requester has appropriate role responsibility to engage in image publishing.

~~15~~14 (Currently Amended) A commercial transaction process within a scalable software distribution framework and object model in which objects are linked together by unique object identifiers, said commercial transaction process comprising:

examining the commercial transaction rights of a requester;

making a determination if the requester has entitlement to proceed with a commercial transaction;

engaging in a commercial transaction entitlement process;

investigating to determine if a requester successfully completed a commercial transaction entitlement process; and

executing the requested commercial transaction.

~~16~~15 (Currently Amended) A commercial transaction process of Claim ~~15~~ 14 wherein ~~the~~ a SWDF system stores information on the commercial transaction rights of external customers.

~~17~~16 (Currently Amended) A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein ~~the~~ a SWDF system stores information on the entitlements of external customers to engage in commercial transactions.

~~18~~17 (Currently Amended) A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein ~~the~~ SWDF Entitlement Information includes information on whether the customer has a service contract or paid money for the requested software product and if the customer has entitlement to proceed the requested software product is downloaded.

~~19~~18 (Currently Amended) A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein the commercial transaction process is an electronic commerce process.

~~20~~19 (Currently Amended) A commercial transaction process of Claim 15 wherein the software product comprises software image binary executables, readme information, installation instructions, product manuals, guide and software requirements, and software release note, and software licensing key.

~~2120~~ (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution system comprising:

a means for communicating information associated with an automated software distribution method;

a means for processing said information associated with ~~an~~ said automated software distribution method; and

a means for storing and tracking said information associated with ~~an~~ said automated software distribution method, wherein said automated software distribution method utilizes a scaleable software distribution framework and object model in which objects are linked together by unique object identifiers.

~~2221~~ (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution system of Claim ~~21~~ 20 wherein said information associated with an automated software distribution method is organized in accordance with software distribution framework (SWDF) modules that manage the software distribution information and activities in accordance with SWDF models.

~~2322~~ (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 wherein said information associated with an automated software distribution method is organized in accordance with a software distribution framework (SWDF) database, wherein SWDF database schema components are configured in accordance with four categories comprising regular database tables, composite link database tables, associating link database tables and runtime information query components ~~modules~~ that manage the software distribution information and activities in accordance with SWDF models.

~~24~~23 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 wherein said information associated with an automated software distribution method is tracked and manipulated by means for indicating classes, attributes and operations.

~~25~~24 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 further comprising a means for managing different areas of framework information including user information, authorization information, software information, configuration information, commerce information, publication information, and distribution information.

~~26~~25 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution system of Claim 21 wherein a link database is table is a persistent storage for the relationship of two objects ~~further comprising information objects are linked together by a means for uniquely identifying the object.~~

~~27~~26 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution apparatus comprising:

a bus for communicating information associated with an automated software distribution method;

a processor for processing said information associated with an automated software distribution method; and

a memory for storing and tracking said information associated with an automated software distribution method, wherein said automated software distribution method utilizes a scaleable software distribution framework and object model in which objects are linked together by unique object identifiers.

~~28~~27(Currently Amended) An automated software distribution apparatus of Claim ~~27~~
~~26~~ wherein said bus is communicatively coupled to a communication network.

~~29~~28 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27
an automated software distribution method is implemented via said communications
network.

~~30~~29 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27
wherein an XML-based software distribution framework is utilized to enable automatic
distribution of software over the Internet and World Wide Web (WWW) while
coordinating, correlating and collecting information that assists software distribution
management and maintenance activities.

~~31~~30 (Currently Amended) An automated software distribution apparatus of Claim 27
wherein software images are published based on software rights associated with a
business rule/responsibility model and software products are distributed to customers
based on commerce model.

~~32~~31 (Currently Amended) A computer usable medium having a computer readable
program code embodied therein for causing a computer system to perform an
automated software distribution method, wherein said automated software distribution
method utilizes a scaleable software distribution framework and object model in which
objects are linked together by unique object identifiers, said automated software
distribution method comprising:

receiving a request to access a software distribution system;

determining if the requester is a registered user;
determining if a user has authorization to perform internal or commercial
scaleable software distribution framework activity;
performing an internal process associated with a scaleable software distribution
framework if authorized; and
performing a scaleable software distribution system commerce transaction if
authorized.

~~33~~32 (Currently Amended) The automated software distribution method of Claim ~~32~~ 31
wherein the request is received from an external user via the Internet.

~~34~~33 (Currently Amended) The automated software distribution method of Claim 32
wherein the user is able to access an internal storage of software products.

~~35~~34 (Currently Amended) The automated software distribution method of Claim ~~34~~ 33
wherein an internal user is able to download software code, make changes and upload
the modified code and both internal and external users are able to engage in a scaleable
software distribution system commerce transaction.